

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is requested.

Claim 1 has been amended to correct the informal terms noted by the Examiner. The second beam of the transport assembly is movably mounted on the first beam for movement between extended and contracted positions, as shown in Figures 18 and 20.

Claim 1 has also been amended to define applicant's apparatus for lifting a wheelchair from a first or ground location to a second location generally above the first location. The wheelchair in the second location is moved to a third location and then moved from the second location to a fourth location. Anchors in the fourth location hold the platform in the fourth location. This apparatus is not disclosed or suggested by *Williams et al* or the remaining art of record.

Williams et al disclose a lift for a wheelchair operable to move the wheelchair into and out of a vehicle. The lift has a platform 12 for supporting a wheelchair attached to an upright powered lift mechanism 24. A movable frame member 14 attached to a member 50 of the lift mechanism 24 moves along a stationary frame member 16 positioned just forwardly of the rear door opening D inside the vehicle. *Column 3, lines 36, 37.* A screw 46 driven by motor 44 moves the frame member 14 between in and out positions as shown in Figures 1 and 3. When platform 12 is in the stored or retracted position, shown in Figure 1, more than one-half the platform 12 is directly on top of stationary frame members 36 of member 16. Platform 12 in the stored or retracted position, shown in Figure 1, cannot be moved downward to a fourth location and located into engagement with anchors that retain the platform in the fourth location. There is no disclosure in *Williams et al* of anchors for holding the platform and moving the platform when in the retracted position down into engagement with anchors that retain the platform in a down fourth position. The platform 12 has tapered ramps 20 and 22 that facilitate rolling of the

wheelchair on and off the platform. *Column 3, lines 22-24*. Straps are used to hold the wheelchair on the platform. *Column 3, lines 25-30*.

Claims 2-9 depend on Claim 1. Allowance of these claims along with Claim 1 is requested. Claims 3 and 4 include a headrest connected to the first member on the lift assembly above and rearwardly of the platform. *Williams et al* does not disclose a headrest. Mounting a headrest on member 50 would not be functional as the wheelchair on platform 12 is located 90 degrees from lift mechanism 24. The headrest shown by *Willey et al* when attached to member 50 of *Williams et al* could not be a headrest as it would be at the side of the wheelchair. Claims 5 and 6 further define the anchors for holding the platform. *Williams et al* does not disclose anchors for the platform and does not need anchors as the platform cannot be moved down to a fourth position for engagement with anchors. Claims 7 and 8 further define the coupling as including a stop bolt for limiting movement of the wheelchair on the platform. *Williams et al* discloses straps for holding the wheelchair on the platform. There is no disclosure of a coupling member and a stop bolt in *Williams et al*. *Varrichio* discloses a lift-assist device for a wheelchair having tracks for the large wheelchair wheels. A latch 36 connected to a solenoid 57 engages a member 28 of the wheelchair to limit forward movement of the wheelchair when the tracks are inclined. The latch 36 is not associated with the tracks. This latch is not the claimed stop bolt secured to a coupling member.

Claims 10 and 19 have been amended to correct the informal terms noted by the Examiner. The second beam is movably mounted on the first beam for movement between extended and contracted positions.

Claim 10 defines applicant's combination of a motor vehicle having a driver's position, a floor and a door and lift for moving a wheelchair from a ground position to the driver's position whereby a person in the wheelchair can operate the motor vehicle. The wheelchair can be a

manual chair or a motor operated chair. The lift is also operable to move the wheelchair from the driver's position back to the ground position. The combination includes a lift assembly for moving the wheelchair from the ground position adjacent the driver's position to a second location. The door is connected to the lift assembly for movement between open and closed positions with lateral movements of the lift assembly with a transport assembly. The transport assembly moves the lift assembly and platform supporting a wheelchair to a third location. The lift assembly then moves the platform downward to the fourth location containing anchors that hold the platform in the fourth location. This places the wheelchair in a position that allows the person in the wheelchair to operate the motor vehicle.

Williams et al does not disclose a lift for a wheelchair that locates the wheelchair in a vehicle driver's position. The details of *Williams et al* herein described are applicable to the combination defined in Claim 10. Furthermore, there is no disclosure in *Williams et al* of anchors for holding the platform and moving the platform down into engagement with the anchors.

R. X. Meyer in U.S. Patent No. 5,466,111 discloses a wheelchair and lifting apparatus operable to locate a person in a wheelchair in a vehicle driver's position. The lifting apparatus uses the driver's side door of the vehicle to support a wheelchair and swing the wheelchair into the driver's position during closing of the door. The door is hinged to the vehicle's body allowing it to swing between open and closed positions. The wheelchair has an adjustable support mechanism 60 connecting a base 34 to the seat 16. The mechanism 60 operates to move the seat relative to the base. When the seat 16 is connected to door 32 mechanism 60 is operated to raise the base allowing the wheelchair to swing with the door to locate the wheelchair in the vehicle driver's position. A lock bolt 84 anchors the base to a rail 74 secured to the floor of the vehicle.

Applicant's wheelchair lift apparatus, shown in Figure 20, has a vehicle door 72 connected to an upright member 41. The door is not hinged to the body of the vehicle and does not support a wheelchair. A second upright member 42 connected to a wheelchair support platform 32 moves up into the member 41 to elevate the wheelchair. A third member 96 laterally moves members 41, 42, platform 32 with wheelchair to the vehicle driver's position and laterally closes the door 72. The platform 32 is lowered to the vehicle floor and held in place behind the vehicle driver's wheel. This apparatus locates the person in the wheelchair in a position to operate the vehicle.

Claims 11-18 depend on Claim 10. Allowance of these claims along with Claim 10 is requested. Claims 12 and 13 include a headrest connected to the first member of the lift assembly above and rearwardly of the platform. *Williams et al* does not disclose a headrest. Mounting a headrest on member 50 would not be functional as the wheelchair on platform 12 is located 90 degrees from lift mechanism 24. The headrest shown by *Willey et al* when attached to member 50 of *Williams et al* could not be a headrest as it would be at the side of the wheelchair. Claims 14 and 15 further define the anchors for holding the platform. *Williams et al* does not disclose anchors for the platform and does not need anchors as the platform cannot be moved down to a fourth position for engagement with anchors. Claims 16 and 17 further define the coupling as including a stop bolt for limiting movement of the wheelchair on the platform. *Williams et al* discloses straps for holding the wheelchair on the platform. There is no disclosure of a coupling member and a stop bolt in *Williams et al*. *Varrichio* discloses a lift-assist device for a wheelchair having tracks of the large wheelchair wheels. A latch 36 connected to a solenoid 57 engages a member 28 of the wheelchair to limit forward movement of the wheelchair when the tracks are inclined. The latch 36 is not associated with the tracks. This latch is not the claimed stop bolt secured to a coupling member.

Claims 19-28 define an apparatus for lifting an object from a first location to a second location generally above the first location, transporting the object from a second location to a third location and then moving the object from the third location downward to a fourth location. This is accomplished with a lift assembly, a platform connected to the lift assembly for supporting the object, a transport assembly and anchors in the fourth location for holding the platform in the fourth location. The analysis of *Williams et al* with reference to Claims 1-9 are applicable to Claims 19-28 and are incorporated herein. The allowance of Claims 20-28 along with Claims 19 is requested.

Claims 29-37 have been amended to define applicant's apparatus for raising and lowering a wheelchair and moving the wheelchair laterally into a driver's position of a motor vehicle. The apparatus has a lift to selectively raise and lower a platform for supporting a wheelchair. Means move the lift and raised platform supporting a wheelchair laterally to a driver's position of a motor vehicle. This apparatus is not disclosed by *Willey et al*, *Meyer* or *Varrichio et al*. *Willey et al* and *Varrichio* do not disclose or suggest a wheelchair lift with a headrest that raises with a wheelchair and laterally moves to locate the wheelchair and headrest in the driver's position of a motor vehicle to provide an effective head support for the person in the wheelchair in the driver's position.

Claims 30-37 depend on Claim 29. These claims more particularly define the coupling member secured to the platform for holding the wheelchair on the platform, the lift structure and headrest. The coupling member includes a stop bolt operable to limit movement of the wheelchair on the platform and provide for adjustment of the location of the wheelchair on the platform.

L. V. Willey et al discloses a reclining platform wheelchair support having a platform 12 for supporting a wheelchair. The platform 12 is pivoted to a base frame 15 to allow the platform

and wheelchair to be tilted rearwards as shown in Figure 2. A linear actuator 40 operates to tilt the platform 12. An upright member 71 attached to member 19 connected to the platform 12 has an upward extension 80. A headrest 84 is connected to extension 80 with a cross support 82.

Applicant's platform is elevated to a position to allow the platform and wheelchair to move laterally to a vehicle driver's position. The headrests 87 and 88 move laterally with the platform and wheelchair. When the wheelchair is in the driver's position the headrests are directly behind and above the back of the wheelchair to provide an effective head support for the person in the wheelchair.

In view of the above remarks, Applicant requests the allowance of Claims 1-37.

Respectfully submitted,

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